**Africa RISING’s Gender Champions**

The Africa RISING program comprises three research-for-development projects supported by the United States Agency for International Development as part of the U.S. government’s Feed the Future initiative. In Ethiopia, the project is operational in Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and Southern regions. The main aim of the project in the Ethiopian highlands is to identify and validate solutions to the problems experienced by small-holder crop-livestock farmers in order to improve food, nutrition, and income security, particularly for women and children, and conserve or enhance the natural resource base. To achieve this goal, gender has to be effectively integrated into all program interventions at woreda and Kabele level. Engagement of **Gender Champions** is crucial in order to raise gender awareness, cultivate gender equity and ensure sustainability of gender work in the program.

At least two Gender Champions (male and female) have been selected to ensure that gender differences are taken into account in each and every IP activity in the different action sites. The champions were selected during the gender capacity development workshop. At least one of the gender champions serves on the IP as a technical committee member. To meet this condition, substitutes were selected during the IP facilitation workshops. The seven gender champions (Annex 1) will drive the gender agenda within Africa RISING’S action sites and provide technical support in the process of engendering the agriculture research for development innovation platforms. The Gender Champions have been trained in gender and sensitized about the gender goals of Africa RISING. They will work closely with the gender scientist and IP facilitators to nurture gender within the IPs. The criteria for selection included:

* Knowledge and interest in gender and committed to closing the gender gap
* Previous experience in working with men and women’s groups
* Knowledge about Africa RISING’s sites at woreda and kebele level
* Representative of partner institution working within Africa RISING’s sites

**Roles of gender champions**

Gender champions will not be gender experts but will support Africa RISING scientists and IP facilitators to mainstream gender in program interventions and provide a deeper understanding of the local context surrounding gender in mixed farming systems. The gender champions will share the gender goals with community leaders and IP members, secure local buy-in for gender goals, persuade hesitant women and disadvantages categories of community members to join IPs and innovation clusters (farmer research groups, create a suitable environmental for participation of men and women and address gender challenges as they arise during the course of the interventions. Some of their specific roles will include:

* Actively participate in innovation platform activities at woreda and Kebele level
* Ensure than women and youth are represented in IP activities at both woreda and Kebele level and that they actively participate
* Ensure that women are represented in leadership committees
* Actively participate in data collection and report writing
* Capture and document gender success stories using different communication tools
* Provide input to knowledge products
* Work closely with male and female actors who are committed and influential in community development initiatives (such as community leaders) to stimulate change in gender constraining norms and attitudes
* Identify areas that need attention to ensure that research interventions benefit both men and women farmers
* Identify and report gender related challenges at site levels and suggest ways to address them

**Terms and conditions**

* Participation in gender championing is primarily on a voluntary basis.

**Annex 1: List of Gender Champions**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action site** | **Name** | **Sex** |  | **position** | **Email** | **Telephone** |
| Basona Worena | Michael John  And/or  Silesih Aynekulu | M  M | SUNARMA  SUNARMA | Project Coordinator | [michartley2013@gmail.com](mailto:michartley2013@gmail.com)  sileay05@yahoo.com | 0911316339  0911046455 |
| Tsigemariam Bashe | F | Bebre Birhan University | Lecturer and Gender Focal person of College of Agri. And Natural Resource | tsigemar2001@gmail.com | 0912181287 |
| Lemo | Ashenafi Mekonnen | M | Areka ARC | Socio economics Researcher | ashumet2003@yahoo.com | 0911066444 |
| Zekarias Bassa | M | Areka Agriculture Res. Center | Assistant Researcher III | bassazekarias@yahoo.com |  |
| Belaynsh Worknh | F | Lemu Woreda Agr. | Office Gender | Fteg4@yahoo.com | 0913369456 |
| Maichew | Abeba Tesfaye | F | EIAR | Assistant Researcher II | sweetabeba43@gmail.com |  |
| Haftay Kahsay | M | REST | Endamohoni REST coordinator | haftay2005@gmail.com | 0923551233 |
| Sinana | Bekele Diriba | M | Sinana Agr. Research Center | Researcher (research and ext.) | diribako@gmail.com | 0911987783 |

Note: Names highlighted yellow are the new GC who also serve as technical committee members